

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INR-07 INRE-00 CIAE-00

USIE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CCO-00 OTPE-00 EB-07 FCC-01 OC-05

COME-00 BIB-01 CU-02 SCS-03 FBO-02 SCCT-01 DHA-02

AID-05 OPR-02 USSS-00 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SY-05 /086 W
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O R 021301Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6537

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 11749

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET

SUBJECT: TELECOMMUNICATIONS EXPLOSION

1. AT APPROXIMATELY 6 A.M. LOCAL, OCTOBER 2, A BLAST WAS DETONATED AT THE BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF ETHIOPIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS ON LOWER CHURCHILL STREET. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER EXPLOSION TOOK PLACE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE BUILDING. BLAST BLEW OUT ALMOST ALL WINDOWS OF THE MAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACADE AND BUILDINGS DIRECTLY OPPOSITE. WE UNDERSTAND FOUR INDIVIDUALS WERE SERIOUSLY INJURED IN THE BLAST. LOCAL AMHARIC RADIO CARRIED BRIEF REPORT OF THE EXPLOSION THIS MORNING, STATING NO ONE HAD BEEN INJURED.

2. THE EXPLOSION TOOK PLACE AT THE BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES. TELEPHONE SERVICE IN ADDIS IS NORMAL. WE UNDERSTAND INTERNATIONAL TELEX SERVICE WERE SEVERED FOR APPROXIMATELY FOUR HOURS THIS MORNING BUT ARE NOW REPORTEDLY NORMAL. SOME
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OFFICES ARE OPEN IN DAMAGED BUILDINGS.

3. MILITARY AND POLICE FORCES ARE IN THE STREETS AND APPARENTLY ARE ON FULL ALERT. ADDIS IS CALM AND BUSINESSES APPEAR TO BE FUNCTIONING NORMALLY.

4. AS YET, WE DO NOT KNOW WHO CAUSED THE EXPLOSION. EPMG SECURITY FORCES HAVE PICKED UP SEVERAL ERITREANS, INCLUDING TWO USIS EMPLOYEES (SEPTTEL), AND ARE INTERROGATING THEM. ADDITIONAL ARRESTS ARE EXPECTED. ETHIOPIAN RADIO'S 1400 LOCAL AMGARIC NEWS BROADCAST, HOWEVER, ACCUSED THE "REMNANTS OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM AND IMPERIALIST AGENTS" OF COMMITTING THE BOMBING. THE BROADCAST ALSO CONDEMNED SOME LEADERS OF CELU AND THE ETHIOPIAN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION FOR INCITING SOME FACTORY WORKERS TO STRIKE. THE BROADCAST VAGUELY LINKED THESE LEADERS TO THE EXPLOSION AND DENOUNCED THEM AS "PETTY BOURGEOIS."

5. UNCONFIRMED REPORTS INDICATE THAT AN EARLIER EXPLOSION MAY HAVE OCCURRED AT APPROXIMATELY 3:20 A.M. LOCAL THIS MORNING. WE ARE TRYING TO VERIFY THESE REPORTS AND ASCERTAIN THE LOCATION IF THE EXPLOSION OCCURRED. ONE SOURCE STATED THAT AN ATTEMPT HAD BEEN MADE EARLY THIS MORNING TO BLOW UP TELECOMMUNICATIONS' WAREHOUSE OFF THE BISHOFTU ROAD. A WAREHOUSE EMPLOYEE TOLD SOURCE THAT TWO SUSPECTS HAD BEEN ARRESTED IN THE ATTEMPT.
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